

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 have been cancelled, claims 3 and 6 have been amended, and claims 7-20 have been added. Thus, claims 3 and 6-20 are now active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised to make grammatical and idiomatic improvements in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application. The amendments to the specification and abstract are incorporated in the attached substitute specification and abstract. No new matter has been added.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and Abstract by the current amendment. The attachment is captioned "**Version with markings to show changes made.**"

In items 1-5 on pages 2-4 of the Office Action, claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto (JP 2000-291749); and claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto in view of Kodama et al. (U.S. 4,695,268). These rejections are respectfully traversed in part, and in any event, are believed clearly inapplicable to the claims as now presented, for the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been cancelled and previously-dependent claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claim 1. Thus, with exemplary reference to the present drawing figures and particularly to Figs. 5 and 6, claim 3 now sets forth a chain tensioner 10 comprising: a housing 11 formed with a cylinder chamber 12; a plunger 13 slidably mounted in the cylinder chamber 12; a spring 15 mounted in the cylinder chamber 12 and biasing the plunger 13 outwardly of the cylinder chamber 12; and a retraction restrictor 20 provided between the housing 11 and the plunger 13 for preventing the plunger 13 from retracting toward a closed end of the cylinder chamber 12 over a predetermined distance; wherein the housing 11 is formed with an oil supply passage 17 communicating with a pressure chamber 16 defined in the cylinder chamber 12 behind the plunger 13, whereby pushing force applied to the plunger 13 is dampened by hydraulic oil supplied through the oil supply passage 17 into the pressure chamber 16;

wherein an axially elongated guide recess 31 is formed in an outer periphery of the plunger 13; wherein the housing 11 is provided with a stopper pin 35 near an open end of the cylinder chamber 12, the stopper pin 35 being partially disposed in the guide recess 31; and wherein the housing 11 is formed with a pin hole 34 extending across the outer periphery of the cylinder chamber 12 (see Fig. 6) near the open end of the cylinder chamber 12, the stopper pin 35 being pressed in the pin hole 34.

Thus, newly independent claim 3 is directed to the embodiment shown in Figs. 5 and 6, wherein the stopper pin 35 is pressed in the pin hole 35 that extends across the outer periphery of the cylinder chamber 12 near the open end of the cylinder chamber 12.

In the Yamamoto publication (JP 2000-291749), the Examiner cited the axially-elongated guide recess 36 (as shown in Fig. 3), and the stopper pin 51, and asserted that the stopper pin is pressed in a pin hole 50 and that the stopper pin 51 is partially disposed in the guide recess (36). With reference to Figs. 2 and 3 of the Yamamoto publication, it is noted that, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the stopper pin 51 shown in Fig. 3 and disposed in the pin hole 50 is not partially disposed in the guide recess 36. Rather, the stopper pin 51 (which is not shown in Fig. 2 of Yamamoto) is clearly illustrated in Fig. 3 as abutting the stopper 37 of the inner sheath 13, with the stopper 37 of the sheath 13 being disposed in the guide recess 36. However, the stopper pin 51 is not itself disposed in the guide recess 36, as required in claim 3. Also, as clearly understood from Figs. 3 and 4 of Yamamoto, the stopper pin 50, as well as the pin 54 (Fig. 4), are not disposed in a pin hole that extends across the outer periphery of the cylinder chamber, as required by claim 3 (and as shown in Fig. 6 of the present application).

Near the middle of page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the Yamamoto publication discloses "a pin hole (40) extending across the outer periphery of the cylinder chamber" and "a stopper pin (41) being pressed into the pin hole." However, the pin 41 shown in Fig. 2 of the Yamamoto publication is not disposed in the guide recess 36. Furthermore, the pin hole 40 shown in Fig. 2(II) of Yamamoto appears to be larger in diameter than the diameter of the pin 41, such that it does not appear that the pin 41 is "pressed" into the pin hole 40 in

Yamamoto. Additionally, there is no description in the machine translation of Yamamoto that the stopper pin 41 is "pressed" into the pin hole 40. As such, it is submitted that there is no teaching or suggestion in Yamamoto that the stopper pin 41 is pressed into the pin hole 40, as required by claim 3.

The Kodama et al. patent was cited by the Examiner for teaching a "stopper pin (26) being a spring pin." However, this disclosure of Kodama et al. provides no suggestion that would have obviated the above-discussed shortcomings of the Yamamoto publication.

Therefore, for the above reasons, it is believed apparent that newly independent claim 3 is not anticipated by the Yamamoto publication and, further, that there is no teaching or suggestion in the references or elsewhere that would have caused a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the Yamamoto publication in such a manner as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention of claim 3. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 3, as well as claims 6-20 which depend therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

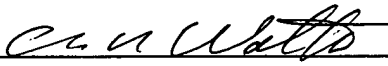
The Examiner's attention is also directed to the dependent claims 6-20 which set forth additional features of the present invention and further define the invention over the prior art. For example, new dependent claim 7 specifies that the pin hole 34 intersects a radius of the cylinder chamber 12 substantially at a right angle (see Fig. 6). Dependent claims 8 and 15 specify that the guide recess 31 is constituted by an axially elongated section of the outer periphery of the plunger 13, the recessed section being radially recessed relative to other portions of the outer periphery at each axial location along an axial direction of the plunger 13. Dependent claims 9, 12, 16 and 19 specify that the guide recess 31 has axially opposite front and rear end walls 31b, each of the front and rear end walls 31b defining a step portion (see Figs. 2 and 5).

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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